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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/528,851	03/23/2005	Philip C. Roy	2870(203-3505)	6326

7590 08/22/2006

Paul R Audet
Tyco Healthcare Group United States Surgical
Senior Patent & Trademark Counsel
150 Glover Avenue
Norwalk, CT 06856

EXAMINER

TRUONG, THANH K

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3721

DATE MAILED: 08/22/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/528,851	Applicant(s) ROY, PHILIP C.	
	Examiner Thanh K. Truong	Art Unit 3721	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 24 July 2006.
 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-18 is/are pending in the application.
 4a) Of the above claim(s) 10-18 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-9 is/are rejected.
 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 23 March 2005 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
 1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
 * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>3-23-05</u> . | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restrictions

1. Applicant's election without traverse of Group I, claims 1-9, in the reply filed on July 24, 2006 is acknowledged.
2. Claims 10-18 are withdrawn from further consideration pursuant to 37 CFR 1.142(b) as being drawn to a nonelected invention, there being no allowable generic or linking claim. Election was made **without** traverse in the reply filed on July 24, 2006.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

3. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

4. Claims 1, 8 and 9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Viola et al. (5,954,259).

Viola et al. discloses an apparatus comprising:

a housing having a fixed handle (20);

a clamping handle (44) mounted to the housing and selectively movable relative to the fixed handle from a first position in spaced relation relative to the fixed handle to a second position closer to the fixed handle to actuate the clamping of tissue;

an adapter yoke (76) which translates within the housing upon actuation of the clamping handle, the adapter yoke mechanically cooperating with a lead screw (78) to actuate the tool assembly to clamp tissue;

a drive assembly (22) including a shaft (42), the shaft being mechanically engaged with the lead screw (78) such that upon selective activation of the drive assembly, the shaft rotates said lead screw to advance a roll nut (94) distally along the lead screw to force a firing piston into a tool assembly when mounted on the housing to deform the surgical fasteners through and fastening the tissue (figures 9 & 10).

Regarding claims 8 and 9, wherein the stapler includes a switch for reversing the rotation of the shaft of the drive assembly upon activation thereof (column 5, lines 7-12), and the shaft (42) rotates upon activation of the drive assembly (22), which in turn rotates the lead screw (78).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

5. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

6. Claims 2, and 5-7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Viola et al. (5,954,259) in view of Green et al. (US 2002/0096550).

As discussed above in paragraph 4 of this office action, Viola et al. discloses the claimed invention, but does not expressly disclose that: the drive assembly is pneumatic powered, the safety mechanism as describe in claims 5 and 7.

It is old and well known in the art to employ a pneumatic drive assembly in place of electrical or hydraulic drive assembly and it is also well known to have a safety mechanism in a surgical stapler to prevent accidental triggering of the device.

Green et al. discloses a surgical stapler that comprising: a pneumatic drive assembly (68) to provide a simple and compact drive system, and a safety mechanism to prevent from accidentally firing of the tool (page 6, [0102]).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art, at the time applicant's invention was made, to have modified Viola et al. apparatus by incorporating the pneumatic drive assembly for a more compact and simple drive system and the safety mechanism as taught by Green et al..

7. Claims 3 and 4 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Viola et al. (5,954,259).

As discussed above in paragraph 4 of this office action, Viola et al. discloses the claimed invention, but does not expressly disclose that the drive assembly is selectively variable to regulate the speed at which the surgical fasteners are deformed, and the stapler comprises a pressure sensitive trigger.

The examiner takes official notice that it is old and well known in the art to use the drive assembly that is selectively variable to regulate the speed at which the surgical

fasteners are deformed, and the stapler comprises a pressure sensitive trigger (as recited in claims 3 and 4) to provide a more accurately control of the stapler device.

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art, at the time applicant's invention was made, to have modified Viola et al. apparatus so that it comprises the drive assembly that is selectively variable to regulate the speed at which the surgical fasteners are deformed, and the stapler comprises a pressure sensitive trigger to provide a more responsive and more precise surgical instrument.

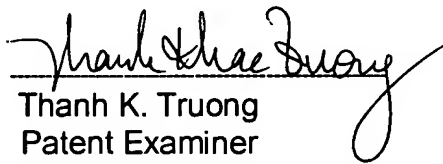
Conclusion

8. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

9. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Thanh K. Truong whose telephone number is 571-272-4472. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon-Thru 8:00AM - 6:30PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Rinaldi Rada can be reached on 571-272-4467. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.


Thanh K. Truong
Patent Examiner
August 20, 2006.